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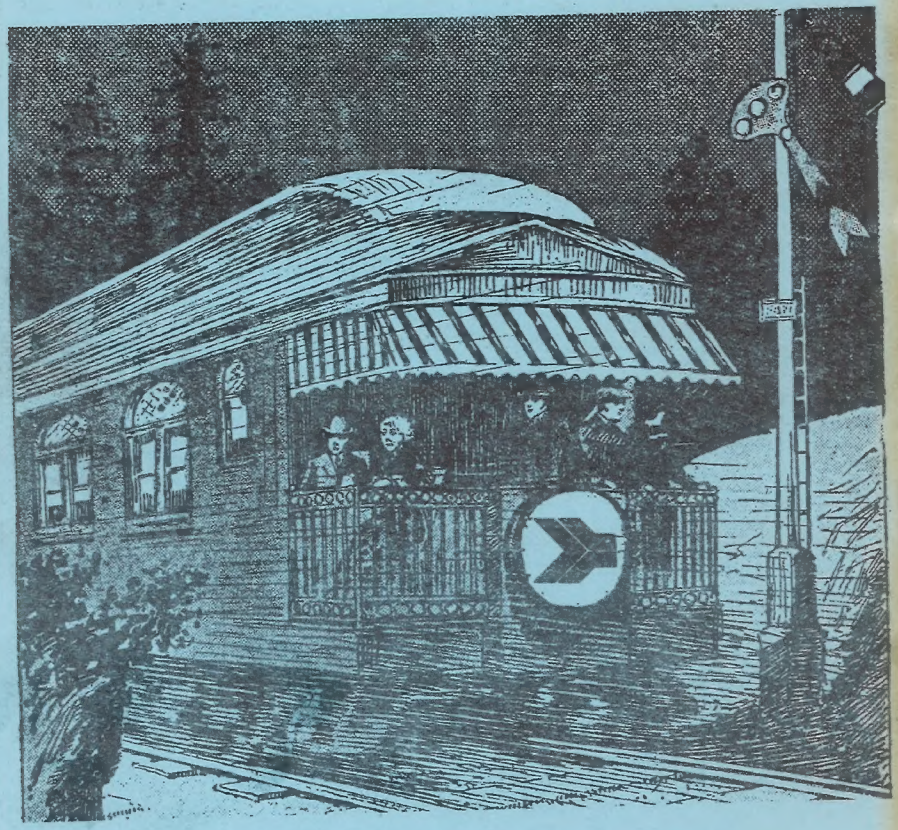


AS YOUR SLEEK AMLINER SPEEDS YOU SWIFTLY ONWARD TOWARD YOUR END-POINT...

Don't forget to send your evaluation of your trip to us for RTN's Second Reader Train Rating Survey. The deadline is mid-December, 1975, for ratings of trips taken since mid-June. Complete details appeared in the First July RTN. If you need them, write us and ask for the First July Supplement.

RAIL TRAVEL NEWS

VOL.5 NO. 18
SECOND ISSUE OF
SEPTEMBER 1975
Issue #116

LETTERS

I enjoyed the excellent 2-page spread on my AMTRAK 80 proposal (1st Aug issue). Unfortunately the copy that was sent to you has a few minor errors which have been since corrected. One route segment was left off the map of the 1980 proposed network: the La Junta-Pueblo segment which Amtrak will inaugurate as a part of the Washington-Denver route next May.

I have received a large number of requests for copies which exhausted my original very limited supply. The plan is being reprinted and is now ready to go in the mail.

The letter in RTN (1st Aug issue) from "Anonymous Amtrak Employee" raised some excellent points. In spite of all of the criticism of NRPC, the boys at L'Enfant Plaza have much to be proud of that we do not often give them credit for. Unfortunately the Amtrak employee missed the point that you noted about the Monaghan-Blanton proposal--we must plan now for the future. My AMTRAK 80 plan does not envision any new long distance services until 1978 when bilevels start becoming available in quantity. Short haul lines can be put in more quickly as rolling stock for those services is, or soon will be, available. There are also important economies of operation to be achieved by starting with short haul lines radiating from a few major points and then filling in the long distance routes later.

If we do not pull together to support a program that will provide a truly nationwide system now, then we may lose the opportunity for such a system forever.

Ronald C. Sheck, Assoc. Prof. of Geography
New Mexico State University

Las Cruces, New Mexico

I'm afraid that the suggestion that Hiawatha Service trains run thru Madison to Portage on the C&NW (1st Aug issue, p.8) is not very practical. The line between Madison and Portage belongs to the Milwaukee Road, not C&NW. Secondly, the condition of the trackage is pretty sad. Speed limits of 30-35mph are the rule, and extensive upgrading will probably be required before Madison-Milwaukee passenger trains can ever hope to compete against the buses on I-94. I stand by my suggestion of 2½ years ago (1st May 1973 RTN) to restore the SIOUX and VARSITY to the Chicago-Madison run and leave Milwaukee-Madison to the future. The Milwaukee Road between Chicago and Madison is much more direct than I-90, which runs thru Rockford, and the Interstate is also a tollway from O'Hare Airport to the Wisconsin border. Thus, these trains would be stronger competitors against the bus and the auto than Milwaukee-Madison trains. Also, the Milwaukee is operating passenger (commuter) trains at 70mph to Rondout and 60mph Rondout-Walworth at present. Altho the track beyond Walworth is not in quite as good shape, it will probably be passable (it was rated at 50 freight/65 passenger prior to the discontinuance of service in 1971).

Mike Blaszak

Glenview, Illinois

A belated but still solid vote for the views expressed by the "Anonymous Amtrak Employee." I too wondered if it would have been from Paul Reistrup. No matter, it made sense.

It is a shame that so much sound and fury is wasted on some of the really dreamy schemes for additional service. Our problem is to counteract the criticism of Amtrak which is not justified, and to urge patience on the critics who are in the

Rail Travel News (formerly Rail Travel Newsletter), Vol. 5, No. 18 (Whole No. 116). Second Issue of September, 1975. Copyright © 1975 by Message Media. Published twice monthly by Message Media, P.O. Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709. Subscription $8.00 per year; single copy 35¢. STAFF: James Russell, Editor; Paul Rayton, Editor-at-Large. Regional Correspondents: Peter Putnam Bretz, Malibu; Jack Ferry, Chicago; Kenneth Maylath, Baltimore; Peter Roehm, Boston. Mailing date this issue: Sept 29, 1975.

ON THE COVER:

The cover illustration is a portion of Amtrak's latest newspaper ad in its "Easy come, easy go" series. Regular readers will recall the airline reaction to earlier ads in this series which made unfavorable comparisons between rail and air travel, mainly in the Colonial Corridor. The present, full-page ad evidently appears in newspapers nationwide, and gets our vote as Amtrak's most attractive ad to date. It features six cartoon-style illustrations, including a sketch of Amtrak SDP40F #566, and goes a bit easier on criticism of flying: "Flying can leave you up in the air. First get to the airport. Grab a cab and pretty soon you're fuming in the traffic. Pay your fare (it's plenty). Or take your car and try to find a place to park. At the airport search for the gate. If the weather is fine and the ground traffic not too heavy you're off. Great flight if it turns out to be a smooth flight, and you're on your way in if the landing traffic isn't too heavy. Then you begin the cab ride hassle downtown again. (Now what was that number for Amtrak??)" It includes a paragraph on "Driving can drive you crazy" and emphasizes the relaxation and freedom from worry of rail travel. See also Quotes of the Week, in this issue.

right. After all, anyone who has a complaint about Amtrak at least has ridden a train.

Don Kotz

Kenosha, Wisconsin

Apparently Mr. "A. Mazzo Kist" (LETTERS, last issue) is one of the many Americans who have been "lulled" into the idea that the only way to get somewhere is the fastest way possible. To say that driving or flying is cheaper than rail travel is pure conjecture. It is relative to how far you are going and the alternative modes. A good car that would be comfortable for a 200-mile trip might get 14 mpg. That is about four cents a mile for fuel only (Ed. note: 4.5¢ for premium fuel in our area), at today's gas prices. Amtrak's coach fare runs between four and five cents a mile in our area. Flying, on the other hand, is very high priced for short runs and much of the time it is not faster than the train or the interstate highways due to terminal or weather delays. As for safety, the American highways are a joke. We are all "expert" drivers even if we never in our lives practiced taking up a car in a skid, or learned what defensive driving really is. Most people seem to think it is out-running or out-maneuvering the other guy.

Yes, Mr. Kist, I have heard of the Automobile. I own five of them myself! I also know every nut and bolt in them and I try to use them on the highways as tho it were a privilege to be there and not a constitutional right! I know their capabilities and their limitations. I also travel on business a great deal. Much of it has to be by air, as that is all there is. Much of the time air travel is a great inconvenience. I am on a bird once or twice a week to somewhere. The airlines move people like so much cattle. When I can use a train for convenience, I use it. This is the whole idea, to get good service back again in this country. All over the country where people demand it--not just on the East Coast. So, Mr. Kist, I am not a pilot, but I have been closely allied with industries involved in aircraft, one of which builds most of the communications found in nearly all American and foreign-built craft. I have ridden the jump seat in over forty takeoffs and landings of a Grumman Gulfstream equipped with the gear the planes you are flying in today are now using. Therefore I have some idea of the capabilities and limitations of present-day aircraft.

Faster, you say? Yes, on long trips. More comfortable, you say? I disagree with that! First class air is comfortable if the weather is fine and you get pampered enough, but first class travel on a train that is run right is a very pleasing experience unless one is a perpetual grouch, and RTN, I will admit, must be printing a lot of their letters. Dissatisfaction, however, breeds improvement, and I thought that is what RTN was all about.

A. John Newett, Jr.

Carrollton, Texas

LATE SUMMER TRAIN RIDERSHIP MAKES SUBSTANTIAL GAINS

After several months of watching train ridership figures consistently below those of 1974, apparently a result of the slowed economy and a return to auto travel while the federal government slowly debates action to take on the petroleum problem, Amtrak and its supporters received a pleasant surprise when figures for August were tallied. Systemwide, Amtrak's ridership was up 7% above August, 1974. Some routes posted substantial gains. Here are selected figures: Chicago-Detroit up 71% (the highest single route increase, the result of introduction of Turboliner service); JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY up 45% (despite negative reports widely circulated in the press); NY-Florida up 36%; Chicago-NY up 26%; NY-Washington up 3%; NY-Boston up 4%; Los Angeles-Seattle up15%; NORTH COAST HIAWATHA down 12% (in comparison with 1974's figures that were swollen by Spokane's Expo 74). Amtrak said that on-time performance for August was 73.9% overall, a drop of 1.5% from July.

CALL IT THE LAKESHORE LIMITED

Amtrak announced Sept 15 that the Boston-Chicago train due to start service Oct 31 will be named the LAKESHORE LIMITED, #48 & 49. Amtrak pointed out some of the history of the name: the NYC inaugurated the first LAKESHORE LTD from NY to Chicago in 1897. Later, it ran as a deluxe, all-Pullman train with a Boston section. Amtrak also used the name LAKESHORE for the train it ran on a portion of the lakeshore between NY and Chicago between May and January of Amtrak's first year of operation. Amtrak said the train will permit same-day connections to San Francisco, Denver, Los Angeles, and the Gulf Coast at New Orleans and Houston, out of Chicago.

DOT ISSUES STATEMENT OF NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION POLICY

Transportation Secretary William T. Coleman, Jr. on Sept 17 sent to Congress a "Statement of National Transportation Policy," the first such to be written by the DOT, altho that agency was mandated to do so when it was created in 1967. RTN has not seen the 53-page report--only a Washington Post summary of it and the DOT's own press release. The release did not summarize the actual policy matters of the document, only listing the "improvements" which would be realized if Coleman's policy were followed. The Post article put emphasis upon Coleman's statement that the automobile will remain "the most universally accepted form of transportation in America." About Amtrak, Coleman evidently stated that it should be funded for a few years to see if it succeeds, and then a decision made about whether the U.S. wants to fund it further. The overall emphasis appeared to be upon the private sector of the economy, with de-emphasis of federal funding wherever possible; federal subsidy should be only a "last resort" in transportation problems.

BUS OWNERS LAUNCH NEW ANTI-AMTRAK CAMPAIGN

The National Association of Motor Bus Owners (1025 Connecticut Ave, Washington DC 20036) began on Sept 23 a major campaign via full-page newspaper ads to directly attack Amtrak in a drive to reduce its congressional support. The first such ad was headed: "Last year 190 million Americans paid for a train ride they never got." The second (Sept 24) pictured a stern-looking Uncle Sam with a long roll of tickets, and the caption, "For what it's costing to keep Amtrak going, Uncle Sam could buy a bus ticket for every Amtrak passenger for the next two years and three months and save America's taxpayers $140 million." The ads talk about a "threat to the future of public transportation by America's privately owned intercity bus industry." They attempt to make the point that buses are unsubsidized, while Amtrak is.

In a reply to a similar attack from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce this month, rail passenger supporter Ray Hannon of Dallas wrote that "Amtrak is the least subsidized (carrier) of all... No form of passenger transportation in the U.S. exists without dependence on government owned and maintained facilities, or subsidy, or both. No 'private enterprise' air or bus carriers could build and maintain the airports, air traffic control systems, or highway networks."

PLAY IT AGAIN, SAM.... 1876 REVISITED

by George E. Lerrigo

Imagine New York's Penn Station about a year from now. The station is full of passengers traveling the Colonial Corridor as you descend to track 14 to board the MONTREALER. After some time in the "Pub," you retire to your bedroom.

The next morning you are in Vermont, lush with greenery. Your train approaches Montpelier Junction. You get off at the red station and take a taxi into Montpelier. Shortly, after a second cup of coffee, you hear a long-forgotten sound: a steam whistle. You explore. And there, in the shadow of the Montpelier Statehouse is a real live puffing steam engine. It is probably a Pacific No. 127, and trailit are a baggage car and five coaches painted in Tuscan red.

You board the restored cars to find the reupholstered plush seats and woodwork brought back to their original luster. You sit down as the train pulls out of Montpelier. It is a perfect day. You open your window to smell the Vermont air and hear the engine. After a brief stop at Montpelier Junction, the train accelerates to get a run on Roxbury Hill. When a town or village is reached, the train stops. In many towns the stations have been refurbished and are used for non-rail purposes: Roxbury, a bank; Bethel, a barber shop. When you get up and walk around you find that the baggage car has been converted into a Museum of Vermontiana from the last 200 years.

At While River Junction, the train makes a substantial pause. It is long enough to water up, and you have a chance to get some lunch nearby. Throughout the afternoon, the train rolls south to Bellows Falls. At Bellows Falls the train ties up for the day.

The next morning there is time to visit Steamtown before reboarding the same train, this time headed over the Green Mountains. The next 50 miles are spent in a hard pull over and thru the Green Mountains. There is much "stack talk," whistle blowing and stopping at the towns: Chester, Ludlow, W. Wallingford, before arriving at Rutland. At Rutland, the train meets its counterpart up from Bennington. There is an exchange of passengers before proceeding west over the D&H to Whitehall.

At Whitehall, you pull in just before the southbound ADIRONDACK which arrives pulled by blue and silver PA's. After watching the D&H train leave, you see your train being turned. You now move over to the Champlain Canal, where a barge is waiting to carry you and your luggage into downtown Whitehall. You arrive in Whitehall only to change again, to the Vermont II--an exact replica of an 1870 steamboat. It is about half the size of the Ticonderoga after which it is modeled. But it is a steamboat with a capacity of 500 passengers. The afternoon is spent cruising up the lake, propelled by the Vermont II's side paddle wheels. At Fort Ticonderoga the boat stops within view of the Fort to exchange passengers with the northbound ADIRONDACK. By late afternoon you are on the broad segment of the lake. Downstairs dinner is being served in the main dining room. By early evening Burlington is sighted. You find convenient hotel accommodations nearby.

In the morning you are again called towards the lake, but this time for another train trip. Canadian National's Northern 6060 is waiting with ten CN coaches for the trip to Montreal. By early afternoon you'll be in Central Station ready to enjoy the 1976 Olympics.

Is this some railfan's secret dream? Well, not exactly. It is a probable scenario of what a trip will be like on Vermont's Historic Transportation System. The Historic Transportation System is the brainchild of Waitsfield, VT architect Robert Burley. He reasoned that Vermont could provide a transportation loop in the style of 100 years ago as a fitting Bicentennial project. Envisioned as corridors were the railroads and the beautiful, 100-mile long Lake Champlain.

Vermonters have in fact long had an affection for their railroads and the lake. Many have fond memories of the Rutland, the CV, the St. J. and L.C. Most were saddened when the Ticonderoga was pulled out of the lake to the Shelburne Museum. Vermont was a pioneer in purchasing the rail lines when they meet hard times (the Rutland and most recently the St.J. and L.C.) as they were lifelines to the area. When Amtrak reinstituted the MONTREALER service, thousands turned out in the rain to welcome it and 2:00 and 3:00 in the morning. So when Robert Burley suggested to the Vermont Bicentennial Commission that they make Historic Transportation their major project, they accepted the idea and set to work on it. The trio of Burley, James Hormel, Executive Director of the Commission, and Jack Burgess, Chairman of the Commission became a formidable team in promoting this project.

Today the system has received Federal funding to the tune of $1.2 million for roadbed improvement and in addition an ARBA grant for restoration of 27 ex-Long Island cars. Steamtown has agreed to provide the engines for the rail part and do the restoration work. The State is still looking for a sponsor who will build the Lake Steamer, altho it has an operator. While the boat cannot be ready for next Memorial Day, trains will bridge the loop from Bellows Falls to Burlington via Rutland until the vessel is ready.

A detailed plan was devised in a feasibility study by Barton Aschman Associates of Chicago, which outlines the operations. Now under preparation is the Operating Manual, the second phase to implementation. Actually the plan is modest considering the market. Only two trainsets of 6-7 cars are to be in operation at any one time. A third complete backup train will be held in reserve. The core loop is as described in the scenario, but branches will serve Bennington, St. Johnsbury and St. Albans. Another aspect actively proposed was the running of steam excursions to Vermont from Montreal by the Canadian National, using Northern 6060 and CN equipment, at least during the Olympic season.

The Olympics are a major factor in considering the operation of a Vermont system at all. The expected visitors to Montreal plus the desire of many to visit historic New England Bicentennial spots places Vermont on the main route between these attractions. In addition, Vermont annually thrives on summer tourists who would make use of this system. Finally, there are those who will be attracted to Vermont because of the Transportation system itself.

The system will have the benefit of focusing the celebration of the Bicentennial onto the Vermont towns and villages. The communities in the state will be responsible for arranging the celebrations and festivals that would provide the entertainment. An added feature will be to call attention to the core of the community, the development of municipal transport, the interfacing of all transportation and community awareness of its historic and architectural heritage. Finally, the trains and the boat will travel at a leisurely pace, allowing people to slow down and enjoy the beauty of their surroundings.

Emphasis is being placed on interfacing public transportation with the system. It is hoped that Amtrak can have a Connecticut Valley day train in operation by 1976. Connections can be made with the ADIRONDACK at Whitehall and Fort Ticonderoga. To the north, the CN would connect. Also the planners are urging the Vermont buslines to connect. As service will not be daily on any line, those desiring return trips in the same day will return by bus or by Amtrak. Large parking facilities are tobe laid out at strategic spots. For example, the vast Steamtown lots are to be used.

The plan calls for an all-reserved train. This would avoid one of Amtrak's big problems, that of crowding. It is hoped that the Vermont operation can be hooked into a national toll-free reservation system and some discussions have taken place with Amtrak. The trains will be composed of open-window coaches and the baggage museum car. Emphasis will be placed on shorter trips with frequent stops. The operating season is projected to run from Memorial Day to Columbus Day. It appears, however, that for 1976 it is unlikely that the system will be running by Memorial Day. Servicing of engines and cars will take place primarily at Steamtown, but a second facility will be in Burlington, probably on the VTR. Federal funds in the amount of $200,000 will go towards station renovation, watering and coaling facilities and the above-mentioned shops.

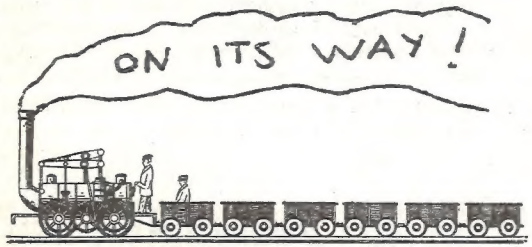
On the lake, the Vermont II will operate on three routes: Line Service, Burlington-Whitehall route, Day Cruise south or north, and evening Dinner Dance Cruises. In the winter it is hoped that the trains can be used to bring skiers to Vermont, with the boat as a gourmet restaurant tied to the Burlington pier. Both will provide additional revenue for the operation.

Since Vermont is celebrating a 2-year Bicentennial (the U.S. effort in 1976 and its own in 1977), plans call for continuation of operation for the 2-year span. The major expenses involve the boat's construction and fixed facilities improvement, i.e., roadbed upgrading. These will be around for a long time after the Bicentennial for better Amtrak and freight service.

Planning work proceeded this summer. Because of a delay in federal funding, the track work began only at the end of the summer, with 100 workers employed along the Green Mountain and VTR. It will have to continue into the fall and winter months. It is probable that there will be several changes before the trains and boats begin running. Altho there are roadblocks (currently Vermont's severe environmental law 250 on smoke abatement), the planners are now confidently predicting a Memorial Day startup for the rail portion of the plan.

As Robert Burley states in the Bicentennial slide show on this project: "It will get the trains back on the track and running." If the transportation system succeeds, it is possible that the system could become a permanent feature in the Valleys and on the great Lake Champlain.

VERMONT II UPDATE: On Sept 6-7 the project was officially christened with a trial run of a steam-powered train on a Bennington-Burlington roundtrip. The trip, organized by Steamtown Foundation of Bellows Falls, was a public relations success. The train carried VIPs, including John W. Warner, national administrator of the American Revolutionary Bicentennial Administration, who apparently was highly enthusiastic. Reports said the train was jammed, and the tracks lined with onlookers. Gov. Salmon, also aboard, said that the project would have to run in the black its first year--no state funding to make up deficits. Consist of the train was two ex-Canadian Pacific engines built in 1946 and 1948, with ex-Jersey Central and DL&W coaches. VIPs rode in the rear in an 1897 private car owned by Richard A. Snyder of Lakeville, Conn. Steamtown plans two more steam trips Bennington-Rutland on Oct 25 and Dec 29, neither connected with the Bicentennial, but which will test marketability of steam trips in the area. Cars to be used on the Bicentennial train next year are ex-Long Island 60-footers and ex-Erie Stillwells.



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AMTRAK STARTS A NEW STATION IN CLEVELAND

by Albert Mladineo

Amtrak held an inauspicious ground breaking ceremony for the new Cleveland lakefront station on September 5. Amtrak's V.P. Harold Graham and Cleveland's Mayor Perk turned the first spadeful of dirt with only a few spectators present. Was it the driving rain or a poorly planned ceremony that kept both daily newspapers and citizens' organizations away? If Mayor Perk were trying to capture credit for getting the Boston-Chicago train for Cleveland, it would be reasonable not to want present the grass roots organization which obtained 40,000 signatures in influenced DOT Secretary Brinegar to opt for the Cleveland route.

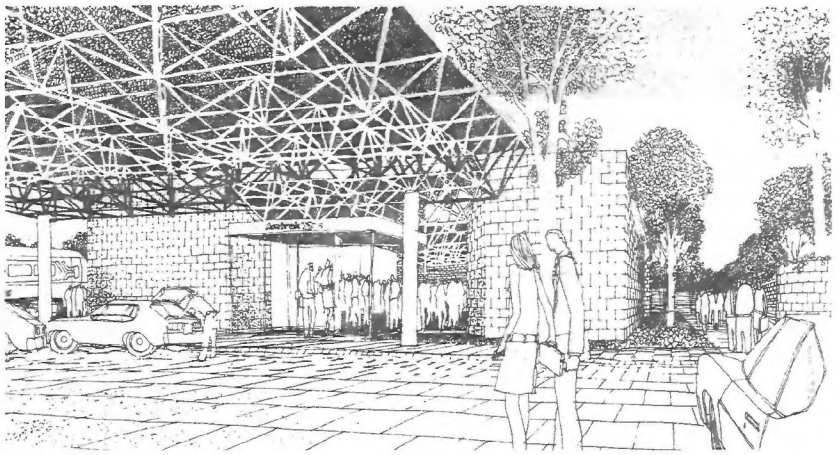
Amtrak says it has been working with the city in the selection of the station site, that Cleveland Union Terminal was not suitable because of expensive operating costs, and that Amtrak wanted to be in the middle of the major civic and commercial development proposed by the city. Amtrak feels it will be quite "visible" if located in the new center. The new center has been identified as the Gateway development, and it was placed in a state of limbo because of financial problems, according to a recent newspaper article.

An emergency ordinance was pushed thru council in order to get around a 1919 law which made the Terminal Tower site the only railroad terminal possible in Cleveland. Many councilmen who voted for the lakefront station feared delaying the train service. "There was not enough time to study all the facts," said a councilman, while others said they were betrayed. The only visible opposition to the lakefront site was Al Mladineo, Chairman for the Grass Roots Movement for Amtrak in Cleveland, Rodger Sillars, Vice President, Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers, and Al Cohn, representing the Northeast Area-wide Coordinating Agency.

Amtrak plans to spend $1.2 million for the lakefront station, which is at best a temporary 5-year arrangement. The city will receive $100,000 for a 5-year land lease, and the building will cost $700,000, while the rest will go for track work. An alternate plan rejected by Amtrak would have placed a ticket office and information center in the Terminal concourse at an estimated 5-year lease cost of $18,000. Passengers could be moved by rapid transit to an interim train stop near the airport. This arrangement would save the taxpayers a great deal of money and please the consumers, but Amtrak chose to go along with the mayor, who indicated he would vigorously oppose any site other than the lakefront site.

Terminal Tower is located in the heart of the city, and is recognized nationally and internationally as the symbol of Cleveland. Amtrak's rejection of the "Tower" has precipitated formation of a coalition of business and civic leaders who speak of a possible lawsuit to prevent Amtrak from spending more money than necessary on the lakefront station in order to facilitate an early move towards the Terminal Tower. The ensuing conflict is based on the Amtrak Improvement Act of 1974, which allows the station to be turned into an intermodal transportation center. This group argues that the newly formed Regional Transit Authority should be the responsible agency for the implementation of intermodal transportation plans because of prior rights into the Terminal with rapid transit. Rather than seek a railroad station in the middle of nowhere, they argue, Amtrak should identify itself with Cleveland's exciting Halprin Plan and the Terminal Tower transit hub. In this manner, Amtrak could be a party to Cleveland's downtown renaissance.

The long delay of the startup of Amtrak service has left many people skeptical. Clevelanders do not realize that they were left out of the original DOT basic Amtrak system, and that the service instituted on May 10, 1971 was the best available at the time. No one cause can be blamed for the termination of service 8 months later, and many feel that Amtrak was too hasty in removing the train. The greatest difficulty was the rental of Cleveland Union Terminal, which wiped out any profit the train may have made.



The hunch-backed, sad-looking figures in the Amtrak drawing above are entering the projected new Cleveland lakefront station. While a symbolic groundbreaking for the new facility took place this month, actual construction starts in spring.

Amtrak has a potentially great market in the Cleveland area. Both daily papers feel Amtrak must prove itself. The Greater Cleveland Growth Association backed the train once and now seems leary to do it again. Even Amtrak officials speak of the route as experimental, able to be removed in three years. No salesman can succeed with doubts about his product, and no city can enjoy the full value of rail passenger service without giving full support.

Cleveland will soon discover what other cities have been enjoying in rail passenger service, and will clamor for more after October 31. September 5 was a rainy day in Cleveland, but after October 31 there will be plenty of sunshine and happy Amtraking.

Urban-Suburban Transit

DAY IS COMING! proclaims the little sun drawing at the right, in full-page newspaper announcements of the RTA, the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority. Quote: "On July 22, the seed was planted for better public transportation. The first harvest comes October 5th." On that date, the RTA will augment bus and rail service and initiate its promised 25¢ fare structure, with free rides except during rush hours for elderly and handicapped people. These changes fulfill part of the agreement approved by voters last July.

WASHINGTON'S METRO SYSTEM was to have opened a few days ago, but, reports the Chicago Sun-Times, Phase I of the automated system operation cannot get started until at least next February, and Phase II, connecting to National Airport, probably will not meet its mid-1976 startup date for the Bicentennial celebration. The Rohr Corporation, which had similar troubles in building the automated cars for BART, has reportedly delivered only 12 cars, and the Metro people have not pronounced them as ready for service yet. Rohr had been scheduled to deliver 40 fully debugged cars by this time. In addition, the central computer and the automated ticketing system are not expected to be ready for mid-1976 operation. Limited, manual operation could be undertaken before that time.

THE BANKERS IS BACK

by Daniel Sage

The BANKERS returned to the Springfield-Hartford-New York line on September 15. Altho today's BANKERS (Train 141) is not what the old New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad BANKERS EXPRESS was, it is a step in the right direction on the Hartford-Springfield line. The New Haven's BANKERS EXPRESS was always a popular train because of its early (9:25am) arrival time in New York.

Today's train leaves Springfield, Mass. at 6:15am, Monday thru Friday, with an E8 diesel, a coach, and a parlor car, and arrives in New Haven at 7:45am. The BANKERS makes intermediate stops at Windsor Locks, CT at 6:34am, Hartford at 6:52am, Berlin at 7:06am, Meriden at 7:15am, and Wallingford at 7:25am. At New Haven the BANKERS is then switched to the EAST WIND (Train 161) and departs at 8:13am. With a stop at Rye, NY, it's then into Penn Station, New York at 9:45am, and the train continues on to Washington. The longer running time of today's BANKERS is due to the switching of the cars in New Haven and the running of the train into Penn Station.

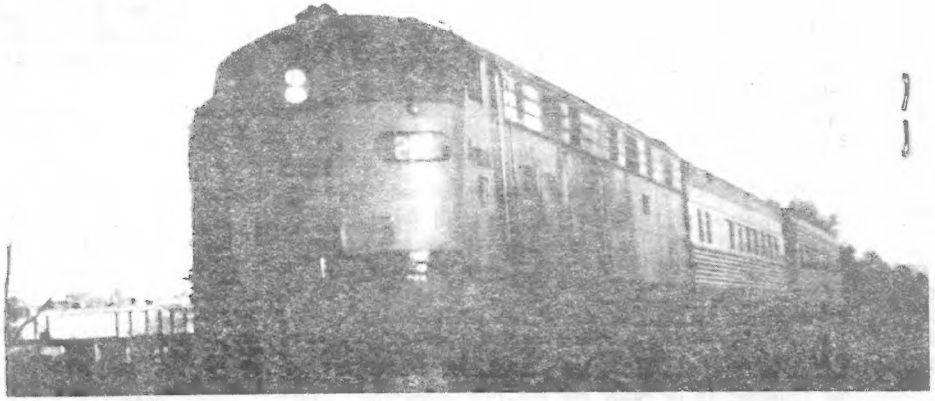
The first day of operation saw only 15 passengers. This was mainly due to the fact that Amtrak's reservation and information bureau did not know the train was running, and consequently the parlor car was empty. Another reason for the poor turnout to a once popular train was the lack of notices of the schedule change, and also the lack of timetables until one day before the change. Watching the train on the second day, after some newspaper articles and TV coverage, one observed a larger looking crowd.

The return BANKERS departs Washington at 11:05am as part of the STATESMAN (Train 174), with a New York departure at 3:10pm. There's a 4:45pm arrival into New Haven, switching of the cars, and train 142 departs at 5pm. Wallingford is the first stop at 5:19, Meriden at 5:30, Berlin at 5:41, Hartford at 5:55, flag stop at Windsor at 6:03, Windsor Locks at 6:11, flag stop at Thompsonville at 6:19, and a 6:37pm arrival at Springfield.

With the return of the BANKERS, Amtrak is finally realizing the people on the Hartford-Springfield line are tired of 20-year-old RDCs and a change at New Haven. The BANKERS looks like a change for the better.

Photography by the author

BELOW: Train 141, the BANKERS on its first run Sept 15 with E8 unit #280, parlor car and coach.



Rail Canada

A LOOK AT THE CANADIAN, SUMMER 1975

by Lowell Clucas

The evolving landscape along the transcontinental route of the CANADIAN, as patrons of this classic train will attest, is magnificent. But would the forested peninsulas and islands of Lake Superior, the sawtooth silhouette of the Rockies building up behind Calgary, or the valley of the Kicking Horse River be quite as enjoyable if the CPR's roadbed and trackage resembled much of the Penn Central's?

Based on our observations during a recent westbound trip from Montreal to Vancouver, arranged by Great Western Tours in San Francisco and preceded by stretches on the NATIONAL LIMITED, MERCHANTS LIMITED and ADIRONDACK, the CANADIAN's 1955 Budd rolling stock appears to be holding up reasonably well. And the main line of the CPR must be either the best, or among the very best maintained railroads on either side of the U.S.-Canada border.

Yet all is not right with the CANADIAN these days. Business is definitely off. We were light, too light for a train of this international reputation in high season, when we moved out of Windsor Station on a misty morning in late August. The consist was seven cars: baggage dormitory, coach, Skyline dome coach, dining car "Louise," our own sleeper "Jarvis Manor," sleeper "Chateau Cadillac," and bringing up the rear, dome observation lounge "Sibley Park." Soft music was playing over the "Sibley Park's" PA system, the train's interior was immaculate, the air conditioning was working, the windows were spotless, and there was, obviously, plenty of room. The one tolerable flaw, the product of many years of heavy usage, was the CANADIAN's fading upholstery.

Not long after Dorval, where the CPR and Canadian National mains pass the Montreal Airport, we were called for lunch in "Louise," served by the French dining car crew which handles meals on the run from Montreal to Sudbury, and found ourselves in conversation with the steward, the first of several talks with crew members of the CANADIAN over the next three days on the future of the train. To summarize their views right here, apart from what the CPR management has in mind, they believe the CANADIAN will be around for awhile. "Ottawa won't let them take it off," was the general opinion expressed to us. "Besides," a CPR conductor told us, "the company isn't losing all that much money. They're receiving an 80% subsidy from the government now. What they're looking for is 100%. The reason the train is light is the big fare increase in June--20% on the standard fare and more than 100% on some sleeping accommodations. The economy is partly responsible for it. But in my opinion people aren't using the train because they've made it too expensive. That's 90% of the problem this summer."

At Sudbury, late that evening, we watched the CANADIAN's Toronto section arrive. Expertly guided by the yard crew, giving directions over their hand radios, a switcher rapidly pulled both sections apart, "Louise" disappearing into the darkness to be replaced by "Annapolis," the dining car which came up from Toronto. With the addition of a second coach and sleepers "Craig Manor," "Allan Manor" and "Chateau Roberval" from the Toronto section, the CANADIAN was still only 11 cars long when we left Sudbury for the 2400-mile haul to Vancouver. In good times, crew members told us, train lengths of 20 to 24 cars are not unusual. Even with the new passengers from Toronto, including a special tour group, there were still empty seats in "Sibley Park's" dome. This particular run of the CANADIAN would not be a major revenue producer for the CPR.

On the way to Sudbury, a CPR passenger representative asked us briefly about our accommodations (an open section) and our destination. This proved to be the forerunner of a long questionnaire in English and French distributed to the CANADIAN's passengers between Calgary and Banff for collection the next morning on the way in to Vancouver. Entitled "Passenger Survey 1975," it included certain questions with a

rather curious ring. "Is there any other mode of transportation that you could have used for this trip?" for example. "How convenient would it have been for you to wait for this train on another day of the week? How convenient would it have been for you to travel by some other means of transportation?"

Whatever the CPR or the Canadian government decides to do about or with the CANADIAN, it remains a highly disciplined operation. At the end of our second day, as the train glided smoothly over the Manitoba prairie, our conductor came on the PA system to announce our impending arrival in the provincial capital. "Ladies and gentlemen," he said, "it is 10 minutes to eight, Central Time. We are running on schedule. In 20 minutes we will be in Winnipeg where there will be a 30-minute stop. Thank you and good night."

Not a word about the crew change which would take place in Winnipeg, merely the essentials of what the passengers needed to know, from a professional railroader accustomed to on-time precision.

On the final morning of the trip, as the CANADIAN moved easily past the lumber mills and grain elevators of Burrard Inlet, three days and nights and roughly 2900 miles from Windsor Station, it was clear that we would pull up in Vancouver exactly when we were supposed to, at 8:25am. The operating advantages of running a long-distance passenger train over a truly transcontinental system under one management and ownership must be enormous.

Thru the 20 years of its existence, its good train crews and management, its marvelous--if aging--equipment and the incomparable country of rivers, lakes, prairie and mountains it offers its passengers, the CANADIAN is justifiably an international institution. Speaking for a couple of people who recently rode it, we hope it stays that way.

AN OMINOUS NOTE for long distance Canadian rail travel appeared in the Toronto Globe & Mail (Sept 13). The report stated that this fall is a likely time for the "rationalization" of transcontinental service to begin, with CN and CP each running a train on alternate days. The rationalization plan under review now by the CTC, the Ministry of Transport and the railways is the Ministry's own report of the past June, which paints a pessimistic picture for Canadian rail travel. The plan, which presents many philosphical similarities with the DOT's ideas on train travel prior to the formation of Amtrak in the U.S., looks for the cutting back of all trains outside the Quebec-Windsor "corridor," terming other rail routes "wasteful and costly." The plan also envisions putting a high-speed demonstration train on the Quebec-Windsor corridor.

DESPITE THE REPORT given above, CN has posted timetable changes for the Oct 26 changeover date which indicate no major alterations in passenger trains. The Toronto-Montreal Rapido trains 64 & 65 (which run Fri & Sun) will leave their respective cities at 6:31pm instead of 4:30. The daily 4:30 Turbos from those cities will be departing 15mins later. The westbound SUPER CONTINENTAL will be speeded up 30mins, to arrive Vancouver at 7:25am. Train 34 to Montreal will leave Ottawa 20mins earlier at 2:50pm. Turbo 35 to Ottawa will leave Montreal 20mins earlier, at 12:55pm. Train 50 leaves Toronto at 9:10am instead of 9:25; train 60 leaves at 11:30am instead of 11:40. There are minor adjustments also the schedules of trains 40, 653, 143 & 146. CN said the schedule of the tri-weekly Jasper-Prince Rupert train had not been firmly set as yet.

CANADIAN TURBO TRAIN may not be dead yet, according to a Globe & Mail report. When the government selects a lightweight train for the Quebec-Windsor demonstration project, the contenders are expected to be the LRC, the Futura (a Hawker Siddeley design not yet built), and the Turbo. The Canadian division of United Aircraft (now United Technologies) is still prepared to produce the train if the government shows interest, unlike the American counterpart which recently announced its departure from the field of high-speed train production.

EVALUATING THE AMFLEET

by Alan Grossley

I tried to approach my first Amcoach ride with an open mind, but it wasn't easy. Amtrak's successes haven't included much of its rolling stock--old cars, we found, could be re-upholstered more easily than they could be renewed mechanically; the French Turbos, tho reliable, were not warmly embraced for their interiors. And from the look of things, those of us for whom passenger railroading means Dutch doors, diners and domes are going to find few of the old haunts on the new trains. Still, there's something irresistible about riding brand new intercity cars, for the chance does not come often.

Thus on Saturday morning August 30 we waited patiently at New London for the PILGRIM to Boston as train time (10:17) came and went. Finally, just after 11:00, No. 180 rolled in, the metroshells looking shiny but a little toy-like on their side-frameless Pioneer III trucks. Things felt different right away--the crew didn't open up until the train stopped and we could get no head start on a particular vestibule--but two trips and 318 Amfleet miles later I had come to feel at home with the new cars.

There were some disturbing malfunctions in the cars I rode: a reading light already out, a trash bin door which would not latch properly, and two bathrooms (in car 21001) which wore out-of-order signs. Besides these, there were a few design features I disliked. Stick-on labels--for seat numbers, trash receptacles, and snack menus--abound in Amfleet cars, as does plastic. There's no place for seat checks either; trainmen had mixed success trying to jam them into the strip of molding on the baggage rack. And contrary to those "unofficial reports" (RTN, 2nd July issue), the windows I saw had the lexan on the outside, the glass on the inside--keep trying, fellows, you'll get it yet--and were already partially scratched.

But on to the good things. I was impressed most with the quietness of the ride. Even the vestibules are surprisingly noise-free because of the tight-sealing doors and diaphragms. Inside, very little noise comes up thru the car floor, and what does is partially masked by the soft hiss of the air circulating system. Too, the cars haven't yet developed the squeaks and rattles of their Metroliner cousins. The effect was a soothing break from the clatter one gets used to on corridor trains, especially in the summer when crews combat defunct air conditioners with a freely-administered open-door policy.

The cars ride well--a bit stiffly, perhaps, and not significantly better than some of the good conventional equipment still in service here--but they are a definite improvement over the Metroliners. And for me the quietness inside made the bumps less noticeable. I did notice that some of the starts and stops were a little jerky, tho I don't know whether this was the fault of the cars or the engine crews.

The high-backed seats almost divide the car into cells, which is unpleasant at first. I like to look around the car once in a while, to see the opposite row of windows for a glance, perhaps, at New York's skyline, and the seats make that impossible. But they also help block noise and smoke from other passengers. I found the seats themselves comfortable (tho they don't recline very much), and a friend who has trouble finding seats with proper back support also liked them. The handy trays and seat pouches are of course direct lifts from the airlines; the pouches are of a netting material which leaves their contents visible and hard to leave behind. Another plus is the PA. Only time will tell whether the crews use it to reduce their accessibility (no longer need a trainman announce the stops in person) or whether they will be freer with information about delays and other problems. Already the dry, airline-style "and thank you for riding Amtrak" has made its way over from the Metroliners. Lighted signs, finally, designate no-smoking areas and point the way to the cafe car.

With the Amcafe, Amtrak is compromising between the labor-intensive diner and the snack car. Two attendants serve from a menu that is considerably more varied than the standard snack fare, but of course the food is largely prefab. Prices on items previously offered aboard Amtrak haven't gone up from the July levels; soft drinks, however, are dispensed from tanks--you no longer get the full 12-ounce can. This keeps waste down but makes the drink more expensive per ounce. One encouraging note was the yogurt, a well-known "all-natural" brand. On the whole, Amtrak's compromise makes economic sense, but I hope that Amcafe--a word which to me possesses all the phonetic grace of, say, "geegaw"--isn't NRPC's last word in food service in the Northeast.

All in all, I must give my nod to the new cars. No, I won't like giving up my traditional vestibule ride over the Schuylkill coming into Philadelphia. I'll miss the picture windows. And I'd much rather sit down to a 3-course meal at a cloth-covered table. But modern, high-density coaches are a must for the Corridor (supplemented, I strongly hope, by parlor equipment), and within those terms the Amfleet cars are a creditable attempt to preserve passenger comfort.

They also work, unlike many of the relics now in service. My apartment in Groton, Connecticut, overlooks the Boston-New York Shore Line (thwarted these days by summer foliage), and several times I've walked to a nearby highway overpass to watch a string of metroshells head west on 179 or 183. The cars ring solidly on the rail joints, and the evening light smooths them into a precise, silvery shaft. As the train slows for the Thames River drawbridge, car running lights drop in unison from green to yellow, and as they recede, the laser-bright markers outshine the light of the semaphore which drops behind them. The cars are bold, and the sight is still a little unreal, but when I remember all those miles in all those rolling-but-little-else coaches, it becomes a welcome sight as well.

I certainly endorse the enthusiastic comments about the new Amcoaches, which are elegant, comfortable and smooth-riding except on the worst stretches of the Shore Line. Visibility is tolerable, at least while the lexan is new; but it's too bad that passengers are to be deprived of TurboTrain rides on that very lovely line between Providence and New Haven.

The principal weakness now lies in what Amtrak too accurately calls "food service." If diners or New Haven-style grill cars are too expensive, then Amtrak might consider calling in a good airline to cater in airline fashion. The present system offers a lower quality of meal than most airlines, without service to passengers at their seats, and at extra cost. On the Turbo from Boston, only stale sandwiches were available, since the train is restocked in New York. One answer to the parlor car problem might be meals served at seats in the existing Amcoaches, in return for an extra charge.

Still, the situation does seem much improved over 1973. Patronage seems much heavier, employee morale higher, and a real boom in business may occur once the track repairs are completed to allow on-time operation. --Fred Matthews

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A REPORT BY William Druhan, entitled "Review of the INTER-AMERICAN" is now available in published form. It was compiled by the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigation of the House Interstate & Foreign Commerce Committee. The 105-page booklet carries the number 53-062 and can be ordered from the Government Printing Office in Washington DC. Dr. Dan Monaghan of the Dallas City-County Amtrak Committee describes the report as follows: "After reading this treatise, even the most uninformed reader could only conclude that the whole thing was a rip-off and that the recalcitrant railroad and the original Amtrak management were accomplished liars. ... It provides conclusive evidence that instead of expanding long haul service, every intention existed of discontinuing them and pruning Amtrak back to the corridor."

Mixed Train of Thoughts

SOUTHERN PACIFIC MAN has been named Chief Operating Officer of ConRail, effective Oct 5. R. D. Spence, Vice President-Operations of the Octopus, leaves his present position almost immediately to take up the Washington job. He is expected to be replaced at SP by A. D. DeMoss, now V.P.-Purchasing..... AND MEANWHILE, CONRAIL had three hard blows come late this month when (1) the trustees of Penn Central said that the formation of ConRail amounts to "confiscation" of the property of organizations with holdings in the railroad, and that the government would be sued for $7.4 billion when it moves to take over the railroad; (2) major financial institutions with holdings in PC told a congressional committee that it would be cheaper and better for the government to give outright appropriations of $7-10 billion to the bankrupt roads than to start up ConRail and create chaos within the financial system; and (3) the Chessie System told congress that it might not be able to buy large portions of the Erie Lackawanna, as ConRail planned on its doing, which would upset the whole balanced competition plan of ConRail..... ROCK ISLAND RAILROAD was granted permission on Sept 23 to request a merger with the Missouri Pacific Railroad.....

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THE FREEDOM TRAIN: the train was moving toward West Des Moines, Iowa on Sept 15, en route from Sioux City, and found itself unable to negotiate a hill. Apparently the engineer received an inaccurate report that the hill was much shorter than it was. The 25-car train was split in two and each half pulled up separately, on the grade near Mapleton, Iowa. When it left Sioux City it couldn't get traction, and was given an assist from a diesel. And several planning problems have combined to cancel the planned stop of the train in San Mateo, California..... AMTRAK HAS APPOINTED Bruce O. Pike as Vice President-Government Affairs, effective Sept 24. He's been with NRPC since Sept 1974 as Director-Congressional Affairs and Director-Government Affairs..... THE EUROPEAN RAILROADS have been getting quite a bit of news coverage lately. Much work is going on in improving lines and upgrading the already high class service. European railroads reportedly are carrying more passengers this year than ever, in spite of, or maybe because of the recession. Sales of Eurailpasses here were 17% greater this year than last, tho 15% fewer Americans are traveling to Europe. Amtrak President Paul Reistrup left Sept 25 for a European tour to take a close look at the railroads in Britain, France, Germany, Sweden, and Italy. He will give a talk at an international convention in Bologna before leaving Europe Oct 12..... SOME MAJOR FLOODING has been occurring during the last week on the East Coast, an offshoot of Hurricane Eloise. The last we heard on how it affected the trains was that the PC line was blocked for a few hours the morning of Sept 26 outside Washington, and Metroliners were being turned there at Lanham, with a shuttle taking riders from Washington. The storm ended, according to the New York Times, Sept 27, after millions of dollars damage was done. The Long Island Rail Road's Port Washington branch had been completely shut down. The PC's New Haven Division had bridges damaged, and was running a bus shuttle between Danbury and Bethel. The problems with automobile traffic were even more severe..... THE RUMOR MILL: the latest story says that the Rio Grande is giving serious consideration to joining Amtrak next January, for a number of reasons. These include the fact that the ICC rules on sidetracking passenger trains make operations now almost the same as they would be under Amtrak. Besides, the rumor continues, Rio Grande feels that losses, combined with the recession, have forced them to the outer limit on financing. This, combined with the fact that the line's officials feel there is absolutely no hope to obtaining permission to reduce or eliminate RGZ runs, may make a Jan 1976 joining date with Amtrak likely. The original incorporators of Amtrak wanted to use the D&RGW line for the San Francisco-Chicago run, but the railroad would then join only on condition that trains were run no more frequently than tri-weekly and that no other D&RGW line be used. The incorporators rejected these demands....

THE LATEST ISSUE of Railway Age (Sept 8) erroneously reports that power cars used to supply power to the Amcoaches were built from ex-Auto-Train coaches. Make that Auto-Liner coaches. The cars are being used until locomotive with head-end electrical power are available. Amtrak might have called its new cars Amcars instead of Amcoaches, but it found that that name was already copyrighted by a freight shipping firm..... A MONORAIL BETWEEN Reno and Las Vegas? Nevada Skyline, Inc., sounds serious about the idea for the line to be powered by geothermal energy, and hope to start building it within two years. They would connect Reno with Carson City and Lake Tahoe first, then connect to Las Vegas with eventual "spurs" to Los Angeles and San Francisco..... LESS DREAMY ANNOUNCEMENT is one from Mexico, reported in Travel Weekly, on an auto-carrying train between El Paso and Leon and other cities in the Mexican state of Guanajuato, which is expected to be operating next spring..... THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of Railroad Passengers called upon congress Sept 11 to eliminate the positions now held by three railroad representatives on Amtrak's board of directors. NARP was especially directing its ire at Robert W. Downing, Burlington Northern Vice Chairman, who succeeded Lou Menk last year on Amtrak's board. In his capacity as chairman of the transportation committee of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Downing was apparently responsible for that recent policy statement which NARP said would "lead to a virtual dismemberment of Amtrak's nationwide passenger network" if followed. Orren Beaty, testifying for NARP, pointed out that the DOT last year saidthat the question of railroad membership on the board should be reconsidered. In a separate development, Jervis Langdon Jr., head of Penn Central, succeeded William H. Moore on Amtrak's board of directors on Sept 24. Moore had submitted his resignation a month earlier..... THE NEW LONDON, Connecticut station has been preserved as an architectural landmark with the signing by Amtrak of a 20-year lease on Sept 19. The city will rehabilitate the building, and will include a restaurant, lounge and offices in it. Amtrak said it's the 21st most heavily used station in its system, with over 18,000 passengers served last June. New York Times architecture writer Ada Louise Huxtable reported favorably upon the preservation move (Sept 28), recalling the 10-year battle to save the 1886-7 building, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.....

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A TRAGIC ACCIDENT near Gardner, IL at 6:45pm Sept 22 saw Amtrak Turboliner 303 out of Chicago demolish an automobile in which 5 11-12 year old girls were being driven home from a softball game by their school principal. All six occupants were killed. The ICG crossing at Goodfarm Road is reportedly marked only with a sign, and the car, traveling at dusk, was said to first slow and then pull onto the tracks before the oncoming Turboliner. There was a reported $2000 damage to the engine (#62), and the train terminated at Dwight, IL..... COLUMNIST ART SEIDENBAUM in the Los Angeles Times criticized the new DOT transportation statement (see page 4). He called Coleman's statement "almost a miracle of the wrong thing at the wrong time" and commented, "Maybe they loved him in Detroit but I'd hate to see that show on the rest of our road." He said it showed that "government has missed the boat--and the point and the people"..... NOW WE KNOW what Santa Fe wanted to do with its "Chief" names when it took them away from Amtrak. Newspaper ads late this month herald the fact that "The Chief is back!" The Santa Fe ads are talking about a fast piggy-back freight service between Chicago and L.A. The ad points out that the train was "for 42 years a famous passenger streamliner"..... AUTO-TRAIN CORPORATION announced on Sept 14 that it will now accept reservations up to a year in advance. They must be accompanied by a $50 deposit within 10 days of the request..... FORMER GREAT NORTHERN parlor observation car "Port of Vancouver," sideswiped by a truck last April while running on NORTH COAST HIAWATHA #10 has now been scrapped..... PENN CENTRAL INSPECTION train consisting of a PC geep, caboose and business car #76 (painted in red, white and blue) arrived in Chicago Union Station Sept 13 after completing a trip from Buffalo to observe the summer track work done on that line.....

A BAD SCENE occurred over the "Give 'Em Hell, Harry" train to recreate the Truman whistlestop campaign train in a run from Chicago to Independence, MO and on to the East Coast. The train, due to leave Chicago Sept 17 (see last issue) had to be cancelled because The Chessie System and Penn Central informed Amtrak on Sept 11 that $64,000 additional insurance would be required because of the crowds expected. Amtrak apparently could do nothing, and the Chessie refused to let the train run on its tracks. A jet was substituted at the last minute, and the train promoters were talking of suing Amtrak for $25 million..... INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION has approved fare increases of 25-27% on the New Haven commuter line, effective Sept 25..... THE DOT/AMTRAK TEST train mentioned here last issue which ran between Chicago & Champaign on Sept 9 operated between Champaign and Memphis on the 10th, Memphis to McComb on the 11th, and McComb to New Orleans on the 12th.....

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AMTRAK HAS SIGNED an agreement with Dade County, Florida for a 6-month option to buy up to 56acres of land for a new Miami passenger station, and possibly for an equipment maintenance facility. The proposed site is at Opa-Locka, Florida, just north of the Hialeah train servicing yards. The announcement came Sept 19..... THE ROHR CORPORATION had big losses in the year ended July 31, and the last quarter of that year, reports the Wall Street Journal, because of write-offs on the Washington Metro car contract and the Amtrak contract to produce Turboliners..... ANOTHER DOT/AMTRAK TEST train ran from Chicago to Dubuque and back Sept 19. It left Union Station 8:20am, Rockford 12:15, arrived Dubuque 3:15. It left Dubuque 3:45pm, Rockford 6pm, arrived Chicago 7:55pm. Consist was engine 203 and 3 test cars..... HI-LEVEL COACHES made their first appearance in Dallas under Amtrak operation on Sept 15 on the LONE STAR connection. The only previous such operation that Dallas residents could recall was by the Santa Fe on their "Nichols Hills Football Specials" that brought Oklahoma fans to Texas each fall. The former Dallas Union Terminal management would not allow hi-levels or domes on any of the station tracks except track 11 which had no canopy. After tracks 1-7 were removed it left only the canopy between 9 and 10, so Amtrak pulled these tracks some six inches away from the platforms to make more clearance. The arrangement received its first trial on the first run of the LONE STAR connection, which included a dome car..... TO INCREASE RIDERSHIP on the city's transit system, Houston on Sept 24 approved a reduction in bus fare by an average of 5¢. Basic fare is now 40¢, with lowest business district fare 10¢..... THE ARAB NATIONS met Sept 27 and decided to increase the price of oil exports by 10%, which will be held at that level until July 1. The rise will mean 1-1½¢ per gallon higher pump prices in the U.S. Shortly before, Washington lawmakers agreed to an extension of domestic oil price controls until Nov 15..... LOS ANGELES UNION Station is the subject of an extensive article in the L.A. Herald-Examiner (Sept 21), which points out that it was named the city's 101st Historic Cultural Monument on Aug 2, 1972, but as yet no one has set forth a plan for developing the structure. The article says that during construction of the station in 1939, catacombs built by the local Chinese population were discovered in the area. They are now being restored as a tourist attraction..... THE CONDUCTOR OF an SP commute train in Santa Clara, CA about 5:30pm on Sept 23 saw a 5-year old boy fall down from the right-of-way, and police began a massive search of the area. It turned out--happily--that the boy had climbed thru a fence along the tracks and was knocked down by the wind of the suddenly passing train, but suffered only a bruised arm and ran home..... U.S. RAILWAY ASSOCIATION issued this month a supplement to its final plan for the ConRail system..... THE OLD SP station in Berkeley, CA is being rebuilt for some other use (a restaurant?), but we are unable to determine what. Does any reader know?..... TORONTO TRANSIT SYSTEM has given Garrett Manufacturing Ltd. of Toronto a $24 million contract to build streetcar engines for 200 vehicles it has on order..... THE COST OF the proposed rail link from Manhattan to Kennedy Inter'l Airport has risen tenfold, and the project is now being seriously reconsidered.....

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"There's nothing easier in this world to take than an Amtrak train... Traveling by train has always been something special. Something different. Even romantic. But now, when you compare it with all the other up-tight means of getting anywhere it takes on a whole new glow."
--from current Amtrak newspaper ad

CARS & CONSISTS

Here are all 6 SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR consists recorded at Galesburg IL Sept 17-22 by Larry Anglund: (1) engines 625, 620; cars 1187, BN 710, 9381, 4813, 4578, 9460,9380, 8054 "Silver Chef", 2200 "Silver Dove", 2653 "Silver Cliff", 2649 "Silver Rapids", 8300 deadhead car. (2) engines 583, 580; cars 1067, 1196, 1416, 4476, 4818, 4805, 9456 "Silver Stirrup", 9382, 8053 "Silver Cuisine", 2265 "Placid Lake", 2638 "Pacific Trail", 2264 "Placid Meadow", 4471, BN 1116, BN 1117. (3) engines 621, 587; cars 1076, 1100, 1034, 2652 "Silver Butte", 4470, 4522, 4824, 9383, 8055 "Silver Tureen", 2204 "Silver Pelican", 2604 "Pacific Cape", 2631 "Pacific Scene". (4) engines 627, 623; cars 1002, 1417, 4347, 4822, 4527, 4825, 4806, "Silver Larch", 8049, 4475, 9461, 9475, 9380, 8085, 2660 "Silver Meadow", 2642 "Pacific Waves". (5) engines 622, 585; cars 1047, 1161, 1571, 4471, 4805 "Silver Maple", 9456 "Silver Stirrup", 9382, 8050, 2672 "Silver Hollow", 2632 "Pacific Shore". (6) engines 586, 581; cars 1183, 1092, 1572, 4531, 5013 "Silver Sword", 9460, 9383, 8052 "Silver Restaurant", 2210 "Indian Canoe", 2613 "Pacific Gardens", 2656 "Silver Crag". Amtrak consist lists indicated that ex-CZ dome-sleeper-observation lounges used on the LONE STAR were to be shifted to the SFZ as of Sept 15, but the above consists do not show these cars. There are reports that some of them are being shopped at Auto-liner in Omaha. Note that the Chicago-Denver consists given here are very different from those on Denver-Oakland.

MONTREALER, train 61 at Springfield MA Sept 8: engines 249, 280; cars 1401, 2100 "Everglades", 2700 "Lake Wales", 8302, 3968, 5409, 4804, 7002.

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Notice is hereby given to the chance of relocation in November. A future Ad will give new address. I receive mail from fellow RAIL PROMOTERS all over the U. S. and I give advance warning to lessen later confusion. Until then use said address. KEEP ON TRACKIN'. Merlin L. Marlowe, RR 2, Fairfax, MN 55332.

Help Wanted: Passenger stories. Are you getting them "Amtrak Blues." Editor: John Maybury, 610-G San Gabriel, Albany, Calif. 94706.

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DRAWING ROOMS ON AMTRAK! It's possible, on occasion, to travel in drawing room luxury at bedroom prices. For full information, contact "the train people" at GREAT WESTERN TOURS, Sheraton-Palace Hotel, 9th Floor, San Francisco 94105, or call us at (415) 398-2994. And of course moneysaving "family plan" applies!

FOR SALE: McCormick Jupiter 60 Whiskey Decantur set consisting of engine, tender, mail car, and 3 passenger cars. Total 6 pieces. Mint condition. Best offer over $100. William L. Staiger, 4160-A King George Dr., Harrisburg PA 17109.

Delaware Lackawanna and Western gold and nickel uniform buttons, $1.50 or both $2.75. J. Lajoie, 22 Stevens, Methuen, Mass. 01844.

SLIDES WANTED 35mm, pre-Amtrak, North and Latin America, especially US Eastern RR's. Need info on disposition of NYC/NH psgr cars. I am planning to finish list of all NYC cars sold, converted, scrapped, etc., with dates. HW list 90% completed, need help on LW cars. Dick Brundage, 3769 S. Yale, Tulsa OK 74135.

LAW??? Several people have asked me, What IS the AMTRAK LAW they read about here. Wayne says, It's worth $6 to find out! I, editor and catalyst, am Robert J. Swan, Box 1866, Long Beach CA 90801.

WANTED: Northern Alberta Railways public passenger timetables and dining car menus. William L. Staiger, 4160-A King George Drive, Harrisburg PA 17109.

HEY, PAUL: A couple of questions. Why build a $700M AMSHACK instead of fixing up the Terminal in Cleveland? Why REPEAT the same MISTAKE made in Cincinnati?

SUBSCRIBE TO RAIL TRAVEL NEWS: Still only $8 per year for 24 twice-monthly issues. Write now to: Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

Railway Passenger Car Annual

Volume II 1975

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